

Principles of Christian Education / Christian Worship

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Principles of Christian Education

A. Presuppositions

1. It is difficult to present material that has value for ministries so culturally and situationally diverse
2. There is great value in and complete necessity for ongoing Christian education following conversion
 - a. No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.
 - c. Note the letters to the seven churches in Asia:
 - the problem in Ephesus, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, and Laodicea: Yet I have this against you...
 - commendations for Smyrna and Philadelphia
 - d. Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
3. It is interesting to note (and, to a point, gratifying) that so much of our Seminary training and so many synodical emphases and materials are being used on the various mission fields
4. The forms of Christian education lie within the liberty and circumstance of the Church
5. The fruits of Christian education lie in the will of God and his determination to grant strength and love; Christian education cannot "program" desired results.

B. General Objectives of Christian Education

1. To provide an intellectual understanding of basic Christian truth which "sticks"
2. To encourage a fitting emotional reaction to those truths
3. To allow opportunities for "practice" in applying Scriptural principles
4. To provide abilities and to foster desire for continued discovery of Scriptural truth

C. General Principles of the Teaching/Learning Process for all age groups.

1. The best learning occurs when there is SELF-ACTIVITY (The Law of student activity)
2. The best learning occurs when students are MOTIVATED TO LEARN (The Law of interest and attention)
3. The best learning occurs, when there is PROGRESSION FROM THE KNOWN TO THE UNKNOWN (The Law of organized progress)
4. The best learning occurs when there is SOCIAL INTERACTION (The Laws of life application and possession)
5. The best learning occurs when there is INDIVIDUALIZATION in teaching
6. The Law of subject mastery

D. Teaching Methods—which aid good teaching (cf. chart)

1. Telling
2. Questioning
3. Discussing

E. Teaching concepts which are essential for TELLING

1. The personal application of Scriptural truth demands a logical understanding of the principle
2. Clear concepts are vital for logical thinking
3. Clear concepts are formed by clear perceptions
4. Clear perceptions are created by vivid sensations
5. Vivid sensations are recorded with fitting emotional connections

F. Teaching concepts which are essential for QUESTIONING

1. Memory Questions A = A
2. Translation Questions A = a

- 3. Comparison Questions $A + B = C$
- 4. Recall/Comparison Questions $A + ? = C$
- 5. Analysis Question $A + \setminus = ?$
- 6. Evaluation Question $A = ?$
- 7. Synthesis Question $A = \text{creativity}$

G. Teaching Concepts which are essential for DISCUSSING

- 1. Build a spirit of cooperation
- 2. Make questions challenging but answerable
- 3. Carefully formulate discussion statements or questions
- 4. Make questions relevant to the class, not abstract
- 5. Present the discussion and stay out of it
- 6. Illustrate the discussion topic with a fitting illustration

H. A program of Christian Education demands strategic planning (cf. chart)

DEFINE PURPOSE
 DETERMINE VISION
 EVALUATE PRESENT SITUATION
 Strengths
 Weaknesses
 Opportunities
 Threats
 ESTABLISH OBJECTIVES
 Specific
 Measurable
 Acceptable
 Realistic
 Times
 SET GOALS
 IMPLEMENT THE PLAN
 EVALUATE + ADJUST

TEACHING METHODS

Strengths Weaknesses Uses

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Uses
TELLING	Time saving stirs emotions gives guidance	No self-activity Few people can do No check on understanding	Transitions Minor points appropriation
QUESTION	Self activity Can give indirect guidance Check on understanding	Time consuming Mentally exhausting Little stirring of emotions	Develop major points Introduction

DISCUSSION	Self-activity Share & correct Demands exactness Gives indirect guidance	Requires mastery Time consuming Argumentative Lacks progression	Applications Testing, review
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Principles of Christian Worship

While much of the language and music of our present worship rite as well as many of our hymns have a strong European influence and character, the basic emphases of Christian worship have their seedbed in the worship practices of the Old and New Testaments and have been applied in many cultures throughout history.

The form of worship used by the Christian community since the first century (with its roots in the Old Testament Church and preserved by the Lutheran Reformation) accentuates two things: *The service of God to the congregation and the service of the congregation to God.*

1. Worship as the service of God to the congregation (worship as *kerygma*)
 - a. the reiteration to head and heart of known and believed doctrines
 - b. an emphasis on the words and works of Christ
 - c. the use of both the Word and the Supper
2. Worship as the service of the congregation to God (worship as *leiturgia*).
 - a. the participation of the people
 - b. giving their best offerings to God as they proclaim and praise his goodness and grace

The worship style which best allows God to serve his people and his people to serve God is called liturgical worship

1. Characteristics of liturgical worship

- a. liturgical worship revolves around the worship order which was firmly established in the Christian Church by the 4th century after Christ (The Liturgy)
- b. The Liturgy means to focus the attention of Christian worshipers on Christ
 1. with an every-Sunday review of Christ's salvation
 2. with an every year review of Christ's life and work
 3. with a regular offering of Christ's Supper
- c. The every Sunday review is made by means of worship forms called the *Ordinary*, historically, a group of unchanging songs
 - Lord, gave Mercy (Kyrie)
 - Glory Be to God on High (Gloria in Excelsis)
 - Nicene Creed (Credo)
 - Holy, Holy, Holy (*Sanctus*)
 - Lamb of God (*Agnus Dei*)
- d. The every-year review is made by means of worship forms called the *Proper*, a group of songs, prayers, and lessons that change each Sunday and festival
 - Entrance hymn (Introit)
 - Prayer of the Day (Collect)
 - Lessons and Sermon
 - Psalm of the Day (Gradual)
 - Verse of the Day (Alleluia)
 - Offertory communion

The Proper depends on the Christian Church Year

- e. A liturgical church follows the basic progression of the Ordinary and the Proper

Ordinary Proper

Entrance hymn	
Lord Have Mercy	
Glory be to God	
	Prayer of the Day
	Lesson I
	Psalm of the Day
	Lesson 2
	Verse of the Day
	Gospel of the Day
	Commentary (Sermon)
Nicene Creed	
	Offertory
Prayer of the Church	
Preface	
	Seasonal Preface
Holy, Holy, Holy	
Lord's Prayer	
Words of Institution	
Lamb of God	
Distribution of Sacrament	
	Communion Hymn
Thanksgiving	
Blessing	

Through the centuries there have been hundreds of variations on this liturgical theme, but the basic form has remained the same in the liturgical churches.

Our church is wise to chose a liturgical style not simply because this is our tradition, but because this serves our doctrine.

1. Liturgical worship compels an emphasis on the *Christ for us*, the focus of the entire scriptures
2. It safeguards the Church's confessional proclamation and response by-its pattern of sound words and its repetition
3. It assures that both God and the worshiper will be active in public worship
4. It confesses the historical and ecumenical unity of the Holy Christian Church
5. It allows and encourages opportunities for necessary variety
6. It offers a comforting changelessness in a changing world
7. Its use follows the example of confessional Lutheran Churches

Our churches are falsely accused of abolishing the Mass. Actually, the Mass is retained among us and is celebrated with the greatest reverence. Almost all the customary ceremonies are also retained. (*Augsburg Confession*, Article 25)

Because of worship's association with both the intellect and the emotions, communication in worship demands clarity, beauty, and personalization

1. In the Bible God communicated to people in languages they could understand
 - a. He communicated to his Old Testament people in their own language, Hebrew.

- b. Jesus communicated to his followers in the common language of first century Israel, Aramaic.
 - c. God communicated to the people of the New Testament era in a universal language, Greek.
 - d. Luther's translation of the Bible was in the common German of the people of his era. The language of the King James Version was reflective of the common speech of 16th century England.
2. God also underscored and solidified the clear concepts of his saving plan in pictures, ritual, ceremony, and symbols which were noble and beautiful
 - a. The beauty of the Garden of Eden
 - b. The smoke on Mt. Sinai and in the tabernacle
 - c. The sacrificial system; the high priestly garments
 3. God employed symbols and pictures, which were part of the culture of the Bible world: shepherd, sower and seed, prophet, priest, and king, etc.
 4. God is pleased to accept the response of his people in words and forms that are consistent with their experience and culture
 - a. Luther adapted the language and historic folk music of Germany for use in worship (but not drinking songs!)
 - b. The language and music of our 20th century American liturgy reflects the style of America

Therefore, while liturgical worship stands above culture as to focus, it is influenced by culture as to form

Is it possible that the worship life of our world missions fields might be built on the order of service which the Christian Church has held in common for almost 2000 years but which is used by means of language, music, ceremony, and art which is distinctive to the culture of the field?

The Best in Worship Form and Style

Worship must be what the church does best, for in our worship we minister to the greatest number of our members and introduce visitors to our Lord. Our worship is still the most apparent statement of the "worth" we ascribe to our God. The challenge for Lutheran today is to combine the best of our tradition with contemporary communication, to be both faithful to Scripture and relevant to contemporary life, to touch head and heart with the message of sin and grace in an age of anti-Christian philosophy, to lift refugees from a jaded generation in praise to their God.

Lutherans must strive for the best preaching possible. That is the product of quality time spent in text study and sermon preparation. Preachers need continuing education in homiletics. Those whose dominant gifts lie in other areas of ministry can benefit from published sermon studies. We need to be both open to the Lord as we study his Word and open to improvement in our crafting and delivery of the message.

Lutheran worship should have clear liturgical progression and a "freshness" each week that is combined with familiarity. That requires easy-to-follow orders of worship, a "personal" tone by the officiant and his conviction that corporate worship is much more than sandwiching a sermon.

Lutherans will want to offer the best instrumental and choral music possible. That will mean training opportunities for church musicians and the availability of music appropriate to a variety of abilities, occasions and preferences. That may mean more than one choir where possible, with varied musical styles. That may mean more than one musical instrument.

Lutheran worship should combine warmth and reverence, avoiding the extremes of cold ritual and trivial fads. That means attention to detail so that slip-ups don't distract our focus. That means also a style of leading worship that reflects God's love for people.

The Lord's Supper should have deep significance and a clear focus on God's grace. Churches may need to find better ways to prepare communicants for the sacrament than the sign-up sheets, which have replaced the confessional service and personal "communion announcements" of an earlier generation.

(Paul Kelm, Parish Renewal: Theses and Implications)